



Environmental Bulletin

Volume 15, Number 11
April 19, 2004

from the Savannah River Site

Public Invited to Comment Through May 19, 2004

DOE Requests Approval of An Alternative Treatment Method

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Region 4, is inviting public comment related to a Notice of Intent to approve the Demonstration of Equivalent Technology (DET) for certain debris at the Savannah River Site (SRS). The United States Department of Energy (DOE) had submitted a request to EPA according to the current hazardous waste regulations under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) to dispose of a waste stream from the Chemicals, Metals, and Pesticides Pits Operable Unit (CMP Pits OU) at SRS.

During 1971 through 1979, non-radioactive waste was disposed in the CMP Pits OU including chemicals, metals, pesticides, herbicides, and fluorescent lighting ballasts. Characterization of the CMP Pits OU has revealed the presence of fluorescent lighting ballasts containing polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) that are also contaminated with the herbicide Silvex, a hazardous waste.

Approximately 30 gallons of fluorescent light ballasts were in contact with hazardous waste contaminated soil. The soil contains pesticide waste classified as RCRA hazardous waste, F027, a listed dioxin waste. As a result, additional treatment is required for the waste before it can be accepted by any disposal facility. The treatment technology combines water washing/spraying to remove soil with an alcohol rinse to remove any last traces of Silvex. EPA must approve the treatment methodology before the waste can be treated and transported to an approved Toxic Substances Control Act-compliant incinerator.

EPA's intent to approve of this course of action is based on the following :

1) SRS has demonstrated that the debris can be cleaned

so that only small amounts of hazardous chemicals remain on the debris, and it will not be dangerous to human health and the environment.

2) The technology achieves the results required by the Land Disposal Restrictions (LDR) regulations for this kind of debris, and is considered equivalent technology specified by the LDR regulations.

3) SRS will dispose of the debris according to all applicable federal, state, and local regulations, thereby providing additional protection of human health and the environment from the small amounts of hazardous chemicals that will remain on the debris. Specifically, they will incinerate the ballasts containing PCBs in a unit authorized to burn PCBs compounds.

Copies of the demonstration, the notice of intent to approve, and all relevant documents are available for review by the public in the DOE Reading Room at the Gregg-Graniteville Library at the University of South Carolina-Aiken campus in Aiken, SC. Comments on this proposed alternative treatment may be sent to Javier Garcia, RCRA Enforcement and Compliance Branch, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – Region 4, Sam Nunn Atlanta Federal Center, 61 Forsyth Street, Mail Code: 4WD-RCRA, Atlanta, GA 30303-3104, (404) 562-8616). Comments will be accepted through May 19, 2004.

For additional information, contact:

Jim Moore

Westinghouse Savannah River Company

Building 742-A

Aiken, SC 29808

telephone: 1-800-249-8155

email: jim02.moore@srs.gov.

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Building 742-A
Aiken, S.C. 29808



The SRS Environmental Bulletin

For more information on this or other
environmental and compliance activities
at SRS, please contact:

Jim Moore

Lyddie Broussard

Westinghouse

Westinghouse

Savannah River Co.

Savannah River Co.

Aiken, S.C. 29808

Aiken, S.C. 29808

(800) 249-8155

Public Involvement

e-mail: jim02.moore@srs.gov

(803) 725-7169

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Building 742-A
Aiken, S.C. 29808

